



IPAA ANNUAL REPORT AWARDS 2013-14 JUDGES' REPORT

ABOUT US

The Institute of Public Administration Australia (IPAA) ACT Division is the not-for-profit professional association of the wider public sector, including public servants and other public sector professionals working in the community, tertiary and private sectors.

OUR MISSION

To promote excellence and professionalism in public administration.

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IPAA ANNUAL REPORT AWARDS 2013-14 JUDGES' REPORT



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WELCOME MESSAGE



Welcome to the Institute of Public Administration of Australia (IPAA) ACT's 2013–2014 Annual Report Awards. These Awards aim to promote better practice and improve the standard of reporting for the public sector's most important accountability document — the annual report to our governing bodies.

This is expected to be the last year of the Awards being delivered in their current format.

The *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act), replaced the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997* (FMA Act) and the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act* (CAC Act) from 1 July 2014, and will remove the current distinction between FMA agencies and CAC bodies.

The finer details are currently being developed in relation to the PGPA Act and how Annual Reports will be presented, including the relationship with Corporate Plans and Annual Performance Statements.

IPAA will work with the Department of Finance over the coming months to align our Awards with the reporting framework, to ensure we continue to recognise excellence in reporting and accountability.

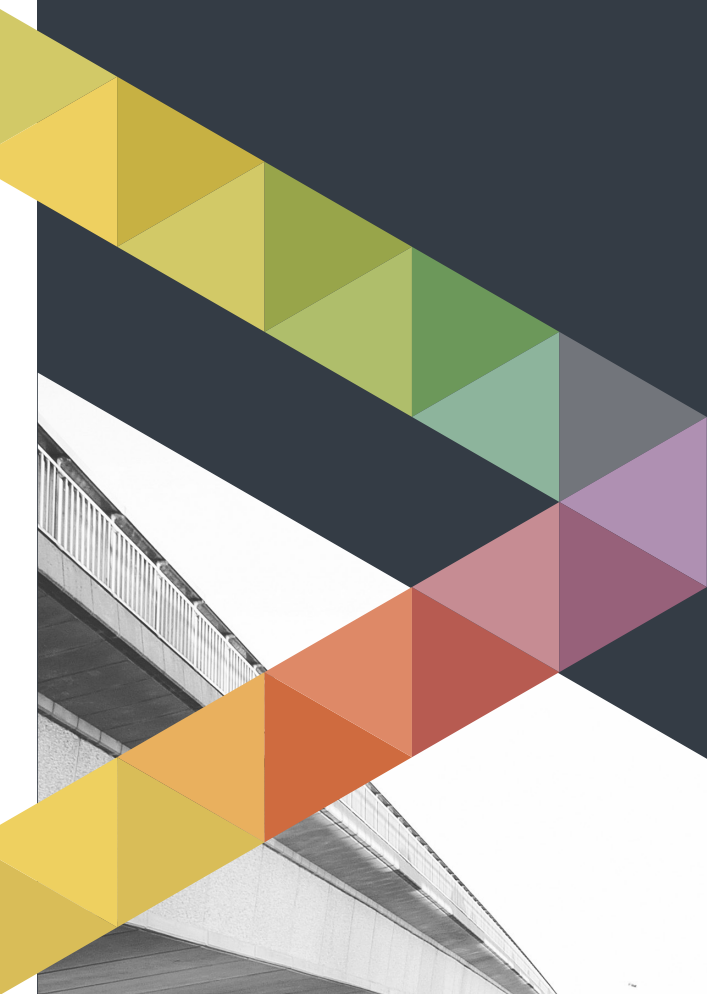
The Annual Report Awards are not just about winners and trophies; they are also about recognising annual report teams and encouraging knowledge-sharing.

Agencies that participate in the Awards have the potential to benefit directly and indirectly from IPAA's separate Assessor Training and Better Annual Report workshops; from the assessment/judging process; and from the feedback that is provided to participating agencies once the Awards have been announced.

It is very pleasing to see the substantial support that the Awards continue to receive from Australian Government and ACT Government departments and agencies. To departments and agencies, thank you for continuing to submit your reports for review; to our sponsors, thank you for your support of the Awards; to assessors and judges, thank you for the substantial effort you have expended on a voluntary basis to ensure the success of the Awards.

Glenys Beauchamp PSM
President
IPAA ACT

ANNUAL REPORT AWARDS: **THE ASSESSMENT AND** **JUDGING PROCESS**



The Annual Report Awards are one of IPAA ACT's 'flagship' events, and epitomise what IPAA is here to do — that is, to encourage excellence and good governance in public sector administration.

Each year around October, the President of IPAA ACT invites Australian Government and ACT Government agencies to participate in the Awards by registering their latest report and by encouraging members of their staff to undergo assessor training.

This year a total of 67 agencies registered their reports for assessment, while 93 individuals from 34 public and private sector agencies attended assessor training workshops and then completed at least one assessment report.

Assessors are required to assess at least one annual report, both the hard copy and online version, against specified criteria. They are then required to consult with a paired assessor and produce a single agreed assessment report for submission to IPAA ACT.

Assessments involve compliance checks based on government reporting guidelines, and quality checks based on

two sets of criteria known as 'CAPABLE' and 'ADEPT', as outlined on the following pages.

The judging process begins once all assessments have been finalised. Four separate panels of independent judges are provided with assessment reports and summary material. The judges decide the Awards after looking at the annual reports and then considering assessor reports.

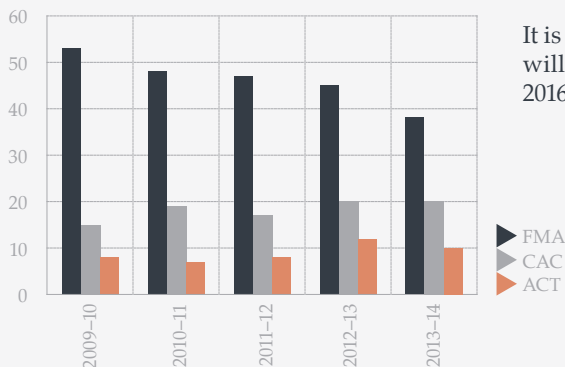
Following announcement of the Awards, de-identified assessment reports are provided to all participating agencies. These reports are emailed to the person who registered the report for review.¹

ANNUAL REPORT WORKSHOPS

IPAA ACT ran one-day assessor training workshops in late January and early February and with the help of Ms Helen Lewis, three better annual report workshops in March and May. Topics covered in the latter workshops included: the purpose and legal requirements of annual reporting; project planning and management; best practice in performance reporting; writing, editing and indexing; the principles of good design; and accessibility and e-publishing formats.

It is anticipated that these workshops will be held around the same time in 2016.

Figure 1. Number of reports entered in ARAs by category, 2009–10 to 2013–14



1. Agencies that do not receive this feedback within a few days of the presentation dinner should contact the Awards Coordinator, Richard Liljak (email: Richard.liljak@act.ipaa.org.au phone: 02 6251 6060)

‘CAPABLE’ QUALITY ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

C Coherence	Does the report provide an integrated, concise and clear presentation of the nature and purpose of the organisation in the context of policy, strategy and the environment in which it operates?
A Accessibility	Is the report written in plain English, free of jargon? Is it accessible to people with special needs, such as those with visual impairment? Does it come with useful navigation aids, such as a well-considered index?
P Performance	Is there a clear line-of-sight between the performance information and the Portfolio Budget Statement or the agency’s strategic plan? Does the report contain clear, precise, reliable and timely information on the results achieved by the agency and the agency’s contribution to desired outcomes? Are results compared with targets and discrepancies explained? Is under-performance adequately addressed? Is there any discussion of challenges, risks and opportunities?
A Appearance	What of stylistic consistency? That is, is there a consistent approach to such things as the use of abbreviations, bullets, capitals, headings, spacing, margins and table formats? Do the pages look too crowded? Is there too much white space? Are tables, graphs, diagrams and photographs of good quality and relevant?
B Balanced	Does the report provide a fair and honest account of achievements and areas in need of improvement, with comparisons over time and against budget?
L Learning	Does the report demonstrate improvement based on learning from the past, from others and for the future?
E Engaging	How does the agency engage with clients and other stakeholders? Does the report identify and discuss the contribution of clients and other stakeholders to agency performance and outcomes?

‘ADEPT’ QUALITY ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR ONLINE REPORTS

A Accessible	Is the report provided in at least HTML and PDF format? Does the PDF download version include bookmarks, hyperlinks and other aids? Can the report be accessed by people with special needs (including people with visual impairment)?
D Discoverable	Can the report be found on the agency’s home and/or publications page? Is it easy for readers to navigate from one part of the report to another without losing track of where they are in terms of the report as a whole? Does the report have its own search engine?
E Easy to read	Is it easy to navigate from the report to the main website and vice versa? Can the report’s financial tables be read easily on screen? Is there a need for left-right scrolling and/or back-forward movements?
P Presentation	Does the report’s presentation enhance key messages? Is progression through the report both logical and intuitive? Does it include material developed specifically for online use?
T Technically sound	Do all icons, links and buttons work correctly? Do picture files and graphics display without error? Has any attempt been made to cater to the needs of readers with limited or slow internet access? Is there any evidence of leading edge practices in website design?

AWARD CATEGORIES

IPAA Annual Report Awards are open to Australian Government and ACT Government agencies and bodies. The following four categories are judged separately but along similar lines.

- Large/medium FMA agencies — (Australian Government departments and public service agencies covered by the FMA Act, and with more than 250 staff)
- Small FMA agencies — (Australian Government departments and public service agencies covered by the FMA Act, and with fewer than 251 staff)
- CAC bodies — (Commonwealth authorities and companies)
- ACT Government agencies

There are potentially eight awards available for agencies and bodies in each of these four categories. Four awards are available for hard-copy reports, and four are available for online reports.

The awards and associated standards are shown in the following table.

Table 1. Annual Report Award categories and standards

Category	Standard
▶ GOLD	High standard against all criteria
▶ SILVER	High standard against most criteria
▶ BRONZE	High standard against some criteria, or generally good standard overall
COMMENDED	Awarded at the discretion of the judges

Note: Not all awards are presented each year.

THE AWARD WINNERS 2013-14



HARD-COPY REPORTS

LARGE/MEDIUM FMA AGENCIES

▶ GOLD	Not Awarded
▶ SILVER	Fair Work Commission
▶ BRONZE	Australian Customs and Border Protection Service Department of Agriculture Department of Finance
▶ COMMENDED	Department of Health

SMALL FMA AGENCIES

▶ GOLD	Not Awarded
▶ SILVER	Australian Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Authority Australian Research Council
▶ BRONZE	National Health Performance Authority

CAC BODIES

▶ GOLD	Indigenous Business Australia
▶ SILVER	Australian Maritime Safety Authority
▶ BRONZE	Civil Aviation Safety Authority Food Standards Australia and New Zealand

ACT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

▶ GOLD	Not Awarded
▶ SILVER	ACT Policing
▶ BRONZE	Education and Training Directorate Health Directorate

ONLINE REPORTS

LARGE/MEDIUM FMA AGENCIES

▶ GOLD	Department of Communications
▶ SILVER	Not Awarded
▶ BRONZE	ComSuper Department of Human Services

SMALL FMA AGENCIES

▶ GOLD	Not Awarded
▶ SILVER	Not Awarded
▶ BRONZE	Australian Transport Safety Bureau
▶ COMMENDED	National Blood Authority

CAC BODIES

▶ GOLD	Clean Energy Finance Corporation
▶ SILVER	Indigenous Business Australia
▶ BRONZE	Australian Maritime Safety Authority
▶ COMMENDED	Food Standards Australia and New Zealand

ACT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

▶ GOLD	Not Awarded
▶ SILVER	Education and Training Directorate Health Directorate
▶ BRONZE	Not Awarded

2013-14 ANNUAL REPORT JUDGING



The annual reports of Australian Government agencies covered by the FMA Act were assessed against the *Requirements for Annual Reports* issued by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, while those for bodies covered by the CAC Act were assessed against the *Commonwealth Authorities (Annual Reporting) Orders 2011* and the *Commonwealth Companies (Annual Reporting) Orders 2011* issued by the Department of Finance. Annual reports for ACT Government agencies were assessed against the *Chief Minister's Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Notice 2014*.

All judges were asked to make a declaration about connections or potential conflicts of interest with any departments or agencies. If there was a connection or perceived conflict, they did not take part in the assessment(s) of the related annual reports.

The judges were unanimous in their final decisions and were very appreciative of the thorough and professional work undertaken by assessors.

COMMENTS OF FMA JUDGING PANELS

GENERAL COMMENTS

With the implementation of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* this will be the last year that annual reports will be assessed according to their categorisation under the Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997 (FMA Act).

Despite 2013-14 being a transition year, 37 FMA agencies have submitted their annual reports for consideration for the IPAA ACT Annual Report Awards. Annual reports are an important accountability and transparency mechanism in the public sector and it should be noted that the vast majority were assessed as being of good quality overall. Hard copy annual reports scored more highly than on line versions, which may indicate that more attention needs to be given to the latter.

As observed last year, it is apparent that large/medium and small FMA agencies face different challenges in preparing high quality annual reports. Large organisations are more complex but have more resources than small agencies. On average, small agencies' hard copy reports were scored slightly higher by the assessors than those of large/medium organisations. In contrast, large/medium organisations online reports scored substantially higher than small agencies on average.

It is pleasing to see a number of agencies consistently producing high quality

annual reports, which reflects well on the commitment and effort made by the leadership and staff of those agencies. It is equally pleasing to see agencies that have not previously won awards producing award winning annual reports. In both cases it appears that there is a lot of learning from others and embracing of innovation and this should be encouraged.

Somewhat surprisingly, no FMA agency won an award in both the hard copy and online report categories this year. It is worth mentioning that the Department of Finance and the Australian Research Council achieved the assessors' highest aggregate score across both the hard copy and online reports in their respective categories.

Apart from meeting formal accountability requirements, annual reports represent a strategic opportunity for an organisation to tell its story (what it does, why it does it, how it does it and what difference it makes) to its stakeholders, clients and the community more broadly. It is therefore disappointing that while meeting the technical requirements of the FMA Act and annual report guidelines, some organisations produce reports that are uninformative and lacking in interest.

Annual reports would be more useful and interesting if more emphasis was given to greater discussion and analysis of performance, including things that

went well, improvements made, areas that did not meet expectations, lessons learnt, and challenges and opportunities both present and emerging. In this regard, the overview reporting by Secretaries and CEOs. While acknowledging that sensitive issues can be involved, a greater degree of candour would be welcome.

It was also disappointing to note that there were some cases where compliance with mandatory reporting requirements was not met and others where compliance was met only in a narrow technical sense, rather than in the spirit of what is expected.

In some cases, greater attention should be given to copy editing, as simple errors detract from the quality of annual reports.

LARGE/MEDIUM FMA AGENCY HARD-COPY REPORTS

Overall, large/medium agency hard copy annual reports were of a good standard, and reflected well on the agencies that produced them. The high quality of so many reports is reflected in the decision to make five awards in this category. However, no single report met all the assessment criteria to the high standard required to make a gold award on this occasion.

It is important to recognise that many of the annual reports which were not awarded, had similar characteristics and features to the reports of the award winners and represent a significant commitment of time and resources. Apart for meeting the assessment criteria to a high standard, the key characteristics and features that distinguished award winning annual reports as a group were:

- Good, clear and consistent design, bearing in mind the needs of people with disability
- Clarity of expression, explanation and structure
- High quality performance information, including analysis of issues and trends
- Candid discussion of issues and a meaningful narrative
- An underlying philosophy of pride in achievement
- User friendly presentation of information and data, including interesting forms of diagrams, charts, tables and summaries
- Engaging case studies, special features and vignettes to bring issues to life
- Current tools and techniques, such as Quick Response (QR) codes and infographics
- Elements of innovation in meeting the spirit of the reporting guidelines
- Attention to detail and good quality control

As the majority of readers can now only access, or prefer to access annual reports in the online environment, it is also important that hard copy reports provide a the elements to allow that to occur.

► SILVER AWARD

Fair Work Commission



This is a very well-presented, informative and readable report. The reader quickly gains an understanding of the role and key responsibilities of the Fair Work

Commission, and what it is aiming to achieve. Descriptive information is enhanced by the use of some well-chosen case studies, which add variety and interest to the report.

Performance information is well-structured and clearly presented, with direct links to the Commission's 'deliverables'. Any failure to meet performance targets is clearly identified (e.g., pages 69 and 75), and the accompanying explanations are generally concise and credible. The Commission acknowledges the challenges posed by current budgetary constraints, and outlines its plans to manage its forward work programme within those constraints.

An innovative feature of the report is its use of QR codes (for mobile device scanners), allowing readers to gain ready access to videos relevant to particular sections of the report.

Overall, this is a high-quality and very readable report, which meets all mandatory requirements but goes well beyond them.

► BRONZE AWARD

Department of Finance



This is a clear and well-presented report, written in plain English and refreshingly free of jargon. It conveys important information about the structure, role

and performance of the Department, in terms which an interested outsider can readily understand.

Performance information is particularly strong. The report contains clear, precise and timely information on outcomes achieved, resources expended and the Department's own role and contribution in securing key outcomes.

Results achieved are compared with performance targets, and any shortfalls or discrepancies are clearly explained. There is a useful discussion of challenges, risks and opportunities, and a clear line-of-sight between the performance information presented and corporate/budget papers. Tables, charts and diagrams are also used to good effect.

This report is an impressive and professional production.

► BRONZE AWARD

Australian Customs and Border Protection Service



This comprehensive and well-structured report provides a clear account of the role and key responsibilities of the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service,

its goals, challenges and achievements. While the presentation of the report is muted and mostly low-key, the format is clear, logical and easy to follow. The presentation at the front of the report on 'a week in the life of ACBPS' gives the reader an immediate understanding of the nature of the Service's key activities, and the overall scale of its operations.

Performance information is strong. The report provides a candid account of the agency's performance, with any shortfalls against targets clearly identified and explained. The Service has also committed to improve and refine its PBS strategies and KPIs, including by the development of new performance measures and by progressively moving from an 'outputs' to an 'outcomes' focus (page 15). These measures form part of a broader commitment to reform of the Service, as outlined in the CEO's Introduction to the report.

Overall, this is a clear, candid and impressive report.

► BRONZE AWARD

Department of Agriculture



This well-structured and clearly presented report provides an excellent overview of the Department's structure, functions and operations. Individual programs are presented in

a clear and consistent fashion, with succinct statements of programme objectives, KPIs and targets, achievements and challenges. An interested outsider can quickly gain an understanding of the key objectives which the Department is striving to meet, as well as its own particular contribution towards meeting those objectives. Barriers, challenges and outstanding issues are also identified in a refreshingly clear and candid manner.

An Overview of Financial Performance is presented early in the report, providing a clear account of the Department's operating budget, operating results, revenue sources and departmental expenses. Here and elsewhere, there is an effective use of diagrams and charts. Part 4 of the report, dealing with management and accountability issues, is also impressive for the clarity of its structure and language. Here again, the challenges facing the department are clearly identified at the end of each component section, providing a far more credible and interesting account than just a catalogue of achievements.

In summary, this was another clear, candid and impressive report.

► **COMMENDED**

Department of Health



This is a clear and well-presented report on the work of a large department with multiple programme responsibilities. The report is presented in two volumes, the first

dealing with the Department and its performance, and the second focussed on management and accountability issues, including the Department's financial statements.

The Secretary's Review and Chief Medical Officer's Report in combination provide a concise overview of the role and work of the Department in improving the health and well-being of the Australian population. There is an interesting and informative discussion of key trends in public health, although it is not always clear how the work of the Department itself has influenced or contributed to those trends.

Performance information is strong, with a consistent format used across all 15 Outcomes administered by the Department. A 'traffic light' system is used to indicate those KPIs and deliverables which were fully met, substantially met or not met. Where targets were not met, clear and satisfactory explanations are generally given. Trend information is presented in a clear and helpful manner, and there is an effective use of charts and graphs. A Financial Resource Summary presented at the end of each Outcome provides a useful summary of the resources expended in contributing to the achievement of programme goals.

LARGE/MEDIUM FMA AGENCY ONLINE REPORTS

On average, the assessors scored large/medium agency online annual reports significantly lower against the assessment criteria than the hard copy documents. In a predominantly and rapidly changing digital world, with increasing community reliance on tablet computer and smart phone software applications (Apps), agencies generally need to give more attention to improving their online annual reports. As most readers will access online versions of annual reports, simply posting a PDF or Word version is no longer considered adequate. Indeed, in many ways a better online version makes annual reports more accessible and useful to everyone. Only three awards have been made in the online category.

In addition to meeting the assessment criteria to a high standard, better practice for online annual reports includes:

- Utilising the power and flexibility of digital technology to add value to the hard copy report;
- Providing at least both HTML and PDF formats with appropriate functionality and easy navigation;
- Utilising the functionality provided by the HTML format to add features such as:

a short overview video by the Secretary/CEO with a transcript

interactive and animated features and graphics that provide useful insights and greater interest

additional video material that could draw on other social media (e.g. YouTube)

hyperlinks to additional and informative material such as legislation and key reports, web and social media sites

use of navigation aids such as a side index that allows the reader to know where they are and to navigate to other sections quickly, an expandable/stackable table of contents (TOC), and previous, TOC, next page and top of page buttons

- Stronger support for access via mobile devices; and
- Enhancing the PDF format annual report by:

making it available both in full and by parts to facilitate searching and downloading

including strategic hyperlinks to additional and informative material

including bookmarks to aid navigation

Conformance with level AA of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) version 2 (see <http://webguide.gov.au/accessibility-usability/accessibility>) and provision of text reader technology, such as ReadSpeaker. Agencies that include this capability as a standard part of their annual report website are to be commended.

As for hard copy reports, online annual reports should also meet a high standard of content, especially for performance reporting.

► GOLD AWARD

Department of Communications



This online report seeks to reach new standards in the use of digital technology.

The report has its own home page and breaks new ground in being available in HTML and PDF format and also as a departmental App for mobile devices.

The HTML version of the annual report has a number of features that add real value compared to the hard copy. The Secretary's video introduction provides a good summary of issues, and a transcript is available in Word format. An animated presentation of key achievements and statistics adds interest. The report is easy to search and navigate, with an open/close contents page, search function, and 'breadcrumbs' to show the reader where they are in each section of the report. Hyperlinks are provided to sections and sub-sections of the report. Text options are available to download diagrams such as the Department's organisation structure. There are numerous links to other materials and web sites.

The PDF version is available as a full copy or as sections of the annual report. It utilises bookmarks to aid navigation, hyperlinks to additional information and websites and alternative text descriptions of diagrams and photographs.

The Department's websites are compliant with level AA of the WCAG.

Overall, this is an impressive report and goes well beyond the mandatory requirements, seeking to demonstrate better practice in the use of digital technology.

► BRONZE AWARD

Department of Human Services



This online report makes good use of digital technology, being available in HTML, PDF

and DOCX formats. The report also has its own home page.

The HTML version of the annual report is easy to navigate, with hyperlinks from both the side index and the contents page to sections and subsections of the report. It includes previous and next button functionality. Importantly, the annual report can be listened to using ReadSpeaker.

The PDF version is available as a full copy only but contains hyperlinks from the contents page to sections of the annual report. Adobe Reader functionality can be used to find bookmarks and search the report.

The Department is seeking to make its websites compliant with level AA of the WCAG.

Overall, this is a good effort for a large, complex Department, which adopts many elements of better practice in the use of digital technology.

► BRONZE AWARD

ComSuper



This online report has its own home page and makes good use of digital technology,

being available in HTML and PDF formats.

The HTML version of the annual report is easy to navigate, with hyperlinks from a side index, a system of symbols and the contents page to sections and subsections of the report. Regular use of back to top, previous and next button functionality assists navigation. Hyperlinks are also provided from the compliance index and to related and external websites for additional information.

The PDF version is available as a full copy and in sections. It contains hyperlinks from the contents page to sections of the annual report, and to some related websites. Adobe Reader functionality can be used to find bookmarks and search the report.

ComSuper is working to make its websites compliant with level AA of the WCAG.

In summary, ComSuper has adopted many elements of better practice in the use of digital technology.

SMALL FMA AGENCY HARD-COPY REPORTS

Overall, small agencies produced hard copy annual reports that were of a good standard, and reflected their more focused purpose and functions. The high quality of reports submitted is reflected in the decision to make three awards in this category. However, it was considered that no single report met all the assessment criteria to the high standard required for a gold award on this occasion.

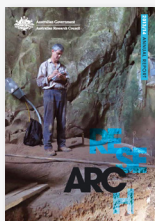
Again, it should be acknowledged that many of the annual reports, which were not given an award, had similar attributes to those of the award winners. These reports also represent a significant commitment of time and resources by small agencies.

The same characteristics and features that distinguish award winning large/medium agency reports, generally apply also to small agencies. However the obvious differences in size and functions mean that direct comparisons between the two categories can only be taken so far.

In general, small agency hard copy annual reports provide a good basis for their online versions.

► SILVER AWARD

Australian Research Council



This is a well-presented and informative report, which effectively communicates the role of the Australian Research Council (ARC). The overview

succinctly summarises the year in review, including its relationship with the National Health and Medical Research Council and the outlook for the coming year, with a good summary of key priorities.

A key feature of the report is its use of case studies, which explain in an interesting way the benefits of ARC funded research, the evaluation of research quality in universities and policy analysis. A simple system of symbols is used to indicate to which category each case study relates. There is also quite extensive use of simply produced photographs with an index of explanations, designed to explain the scope and significance of the ARC's activities.

Performance information is well-structured and clearly presented. A quick snapshot is provided through an indexed summary of performance for the major areas of expenditure and activity. More detailed information and data, including three year trends, has clear links to programme objectives and the ARC's deliverables.

Management and accountability information is clear and comprehensive. The financial statements section, while acceptable, could be improved through use of a larger font size.

Overall, this is a high-quality report, which meets all mandatory requirements.

► SILVER AWARD

Australian Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Authority



This report is very good at explaining the Organ and Tissue Authority's role in pursuing a world's best practice approach to organ and tissue donation

for transplantation. An infographic provides a snapshot of key data related to organ and tissue donation, while the Chief Executive Officer's review and National Medical Director's report are very informative.

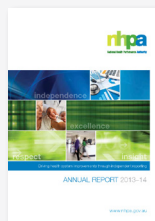
Performance reporting is a prominent feature, with good use and presentation of trend information on organ and tissue donation and transplantation and of a survey of community attitudes and awareness. A useful summary of progress with the national reform programme is provided. The quantitative and qualitative data and information is well complemented by good use of profiles of people and projects.

Management and accountability information and the financial statements sections are clear and well presented.

In summary, this is a well-designed and high-quality report, which meets all mandatory requirements.

► BRONZE AWARD

National Health Performance Authority



This is a well presented and informative report from a relatively new organisation. It is designed to provide the reader with an early and

clear understanding of the role of the Authority and the year at a glance. The CEO's review and message from the Chairman provide useful insights and outline the Authority's aspirations for the future.

Performance reporting, which is qualitative in nature, is well structured against the Portfolio Budget Statements and the Authority's strategic objectives. Some interesting additional information is provided in the form of several infographics.

The management and accountability information and the financial statements are clear and well presented.

Overall, this is a sound and useful report from an agency with a specialised role.

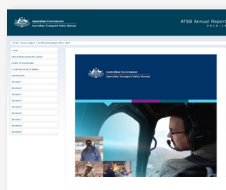
SMALL FMA AGENCY ONLINE REPORTS

As for the large/medium agencies, the assessors scored small agency online annual reports significantly lower against the assessment criteria than the hard copy documents. Moreover the gap between large/medium agencies and small agencies is quite significant. It would seem that small agencies need more support, perhaps through a community of practice, to enhance their online report presence. Two agencies were considered to merit recognition through awards.

In general many elements of best practice identified for large/medium agencies are issues that small agencies have not yet tackled but should aspire to achieve. Similarly, it is important that the online versions of small agencies' annual reports have good quality content, especially performance information.

► BRONZE AWARD

Australian Transport Safety Bureau



This report is easy to find with its own home page and presented in both HTML and PDF formats.

The HTML version of the annual report is well structured and has several features that add value to the hard copy. The report is easy to navigate, with hyperlinks from the expandable index page to its main sections as well as previous, next and back to top buttons. It uses alternative text for most images. There are hyperlinks to a number of internal and external websites for additional information.

The PDF version is available only as a full copy but has hyperlinks from the contents page to the main sections of the report. There are also hyperlinks to some internal and external websites. Adobe Reader functionality can be used to find bookmarks and search the report.

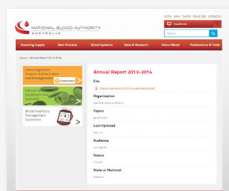
The Bureau's websites are compliant with level AA of the WCAG and the report provides a text size tool and a text to speech function. The annual report page and PDF version of the report can be listened to using ReadSpeaker.

In terms of content, the report includes an interesting feature article on the work of its investigators.

In summary, the Bureau has made a substantial effort to adopt many elements of better practice in online reporting.

► COMMENDED

National Blood Authority



This report is relatively easy to find, has its own home page and is presented in both HTML and PDF formats.

A feature of the report's content is the good trend performance information.

The HTML version of the annual report has features that add value to the hard copy. The report is easy to navigate, with hyperlinks from the expandable index and its contents page to sections of the report, including tables. It also has previous and next function buttons.

There are also hyperlinks to some internal and external websites for additional information.

The PDF version is only available as a full copy but has hyperlinks from the contents page to the main sections of the report. Adobe Reader functionality can be used to find bookmarks and search the report.

The Authority is working to make its websites compliant with level AA of the WCAG.

The Authority is highly commended for its substantial endeavours in online reporting.

COMMENTS OF CAC JUDGING PANEL

GENERAL COMMENTS

The Judging Panel for this category of annual reports would like to record its appreciation for the quality of the work undertaken by the assessor team. Their comments were astute and well informed and greatly facilitated the work of the Judging Panel.

The Judging Panel identified the following general issues:

- Continued failure of a small number of agencies/authorities to fully satisfy the specified reporting requirements;
- A number of agencies/authorities appeared to be reluctant to acknowledge what did not work (ie 'failures');
- A small number of reports were released with relatively minor printing, indexing and spelling errors;
- There was only a marginal improvement over the previous years' reports in assisting people with disabilities, including the visual and hearing impaired;
- Some combinations of colours appeared to 'work better' (in the Judging Panel's opinion) in the online versions of reports;
- There did appear to be a marked improvement in the online versions of some agencies' annual reports although there is still a large number of agencies (just under a half of the agencies) which present only PDF versions of their online report;
- A number of agencies cited 'fiscal restraints' as an 'operating impediment' to their performance outcomes. The Judging Panel was not persuaded by these propositions. In our opinion, 'fiscal restraints' are part and parcel of the operating environment and should be treated as such. This could lead, in turn, to a more useful discussion about priorities and the agency approach to managing risks against the resources available;
- The Judging Panel considered that the annual reports of those agencies with regulatory functions would be enhanced if the reports contained a considered statement of the agencies' overall regulatory 'philosophy'. The FSANZ Report does include a short section under 'Regulating and Managing Food Risks' which discusses the application of economic and other social science disciplines that goes some way in this direction, as does a brief discussion of Risk Management in the CASA report.

CAC BODY HARD-COPY REPORTS

► GOLD

Indigenous Business Australia



As with last year, this annual report is outstanding with very high visual impact. The report provides a concise and clear presentation of the agency activities during the reporting

period. Colour highlights at the top of pages aid navigation.

The report clearly articulates performance results against the objectives, detailing what worked and what didn't, and describes how performance can be improved. All tables, graphs and photographs are excellent quality and the infographics in the overview are particularly well presented. The report outlines how the agency engages with clients and makes very sensible use of case studies to illustrate specific aspects of the agency's activities.

Overall, this is a very professionally presented, attractive annual report.

► SILVER

Australian Maritime Safety Authority



This annual report is very clearly presented, starting with a concise, attractive presentation of the Authority's Vision, Mission and Aspirations inside the front cover.

Very good use of photographs, graphs, diagrams, infographics, together with a strong hierarchy of headings aids reader understanding of the complex regulatory activities undertaken by the authority.

Breakout 'pages' in various sections further explain practical challenges, specific incidents and achievements. A good example of this is the coverage of the rescue operations put in place for the Russian ice strengthened research turned passenger ship, MV Akademik Shokalskiy.

Overall, this is a highly successful annual report which presents a comprehensive picture of the authority's activities and performance.

► **BRONZE**

Civil Aviation Safety Authority



This annual report is comprehensive, easy to understand and well structured against the authority's outcomes. Performance measures presented

are transparent and unambiguous and targets which were not met are discussed. This report is outstanding in relation to the way it presents the actual performance aspects of the authority's activities. The design is cleverly linked to the 'heads up' displays in modern aeroplanes and is carried through the report to good effect. The report demonstrates effective engagement with stakeholders and the wider aviation community. The choice and presentation of interesting case studies adds significantly to the appeal of this report.

Overall, a this is busy, but highly readable report which is well designed and clearly highlights the authority's performance during the reporting period.

► **BRONZE**

Food Standards Australia New Zealand



This annual report is particularly businesslike and very easy to read. The report presents complex, technical information and activities associated with food regulation

in an engaging way which reflects the current domestic and international contexts. There is a clear emphasis on public engagement throughout the report, including the use of social media to improve information flows to the general public. The report outlines expected and achieved results and explicitly covers a range of challenges to the agency.

Overall, this is a very informative annual report which avoids overly technical explanations or associated jargon.

CAC BODY ONLINE REPORTS

► GOLD

Clean Energy Finance Corporation



This is an engaging, accessible and easily navigable and readable report.

It is one click off the CEFC homepage, is in PDF and HTML formats and has easy sidebar navigation between section and tabs to move back and forward between pages. The report uses colour, photographs, graphics, media and hyperlinks to very good effect – engaging the reader in the substance of the Corporation's investment activity and the challenges it has faced.

This report is an informative and engaging document.

► SILVER

Indigenous Business Australia



This report is easily accessible, appealing and enjoyable reading.

The online version is easily accessible from the IBA homepage. It is straightforward to navigate between sections and pages of the report which is in PDF and HTML formats.

It is well set out (like the hard copy) and has crisp and clean display, with good use of photos, graphics and layout, to engage and hold the reader's attention through the IBA's 'story' for 2013-14.

► BRONZE

Australian Maritime Safety Authority



This online version is readily located both as a rolling banner on the homepage and

as corporate information in the section 'About AMSA'.

As with the hard copy version, the reader gets a clear line of sight from the agency's vision and mission through to its strategic challenges. The online version is available in both PDF and HTML formats. It is easily navigable with a good sidebar index and uses photographs, infographics and video material very well to provide a compelling narrative on the diverse and complex work of the organisation from shipping to search and rescue.

► COMMENDED

Food Standards Australia New Zealand



This is an informative report which makes a significant effort to communicate

complex subject matter. It has PDF and HTML versions with useful sidebar navigation and is readily discoverable on the 'About Us' section of the website under Corporate documents.

While there are back to top hyperlinks, 'next/previous' links would have enhanced further its ease of use. The report would have benefited from using some more innovative technical approaches to enhance the document and its links with other related activity - to bring 'alive' the work of the agency.

COMMENTS OF ACT GOVERNMENT JUDGING PANELS

OVERALL COMMENTS

The ACT Government 2013-14 Annual Reports were easy to understand, free of jargon and pitched to the audience.

The judges placed considerable focus on the requirements underpinning the purpose of annual reports, in particular that they are historical records of government and policy decisions. While many annual reports provide information on activities undertaken during the year, there was a lack of emphasis on key decisions made.

Performance reporting was generally comprehensive, but could have been enhanced with explanations of links between initiatives and outcomes. While the reports provided a picture of what happened during the year, further explanation is needed on why it happened.

The role of directorates was generally clear with some annual reports providing concise explanation of their role down to output level.

The judges were pleased to see the detail provided in the ACT Government annual reports relating to community engagement and support, which demonstrated the strong connection that ACT Government directorates have with their respective key stakeholders.

This year the judges considered that the gold award standard had not been achieved and awarded one silver and two joint bronze winners.

Opportunities exist for improvement in the areas of further analysis of multi-year trends, specificity of achievement in the reporting year, and more detailed discussion of lessons learnt from under-performance. Further consideration of the length of some individual reports is also needed given the ACT guidelines require ACT annual reports to be 'modest documents' that provide an objective account of performance.

► **SILVER**

ACT POLICING



This report provides a thorough and comprehensive statement of ACT Policing’s focus during 2013-14 and the achievement of its key outcomes. In particular, the report clearly articulates performance targets and provides an analysis of the extent to which those targets were achieved.

The report demonstrates the value of using trends, combined with a frank assessment of performance to establish the basis for future learning and to refine measures of performance. The comprehensive focus on community engagement in the report reinforced ACT Policing’s emphasis on community partnerships.

► **BRONZE**

Education and Training Directorate



This report was very well presented with attractive and relevant use of graphics, photos and tables. The performance highlights table was effective and well cross-referenced to the later sections to the report. The challenges and future plans were well documented.

The description of community engagement mechanisms were also comprehensive. Reporting was based around key priorities, which provided an excellent understanding of progress in key areas. Further elaboration of key roles and ongoing activities would have enabled the reader to better appreciate the results achieved during the year.

► BRONZE

Health Directorate



This annual report provides a clear and concise account of performance during 2013-14 supported by a good level of detail. The images, graphs and tables in the

report were relevant to the content and facilitate delivery of key messages.

The content and presentation of strategic indicators assist the reader to appreciate challenges and achievements during the year. The inclusion of national comparisons and trend graphs and data further added to the reader's understanding of the level of performance achieved.

ACT GOVERNMENT AGENCY ONLINE REPORTS

The availability and accessibility of online reports is similar to last year but with increasing stakeholder access to online annual reports, expectations are increasing. In most instances the online version is either a PDF format or an HTML format with limited use of the functionality that HTML can provide.

Online annual reports were generally easy to find, with access via a 'publications' link being more intuitive than the 'about us' link. Downloading was a simple process but most reports needed to be downloaded in their entirety rather by section or indexed chapter.

Use of hyperlinks improved the ease of navigation. Online annual reports that included links to internal and external resources added much greater value to the reader's experience and provided easy exploration of related information.

The high expectations of the gold award for accessibility and navigation were not met and this provides opportunity for improvement next year. This year, two online annual reports were of a significantly higher standard than the others and the judges awarded two silver awards.

► **SILVER**

**Education and
Training Directorate**



This online annual report was easy to access and read, with images and graphics reflecting those

in the hard copy version.

This online report also provided good links for access to further information, resources and contacts. Through its online report, ACT Education and Training also demonstrated good integration with social media including Twitter and Facebook.

The judges were encouraged to see the use of an introductory video following the trend set last year by another directorate with the addition of a transcript to the video.

► **SILVER**

Health Directorate



This online annual report was easy to navigate, through named section links to the left and

within the body of the report. Additional indexing within the document further facilitated navigation. The report was easy to read and provided a reliable representation of the information contained in the hardcopy report.

ACT Health has built on the benchmark it established from last year with an enhanced introductory video that includes additional presenters providing opportunity for greater resonance with viewers and establishing a higher standard for online annual report videos.

JUDGES AND ASSESSORS



IPAA ACT would like to thank all judges and assessors for their professional approach, assistance, time and hard work.

JUDGES

Large/medium FMA Awards

Mr Grahame Cook PSM (Chair)
Professor John Wanna
Mr Peter Grant PSM

Small FMA Awards

Mr Grahame Cook PSM (Chair)
Mr Glenn Archer

CAC Awards

Mr Geoff Gorrie PSM (Chair)
Mr Peter Yuile
Mr Michael D'Ascenzo AO

ACT Government Awards

Ms Gill Savage (Chair)
Mr Alison Turner

ASSESSORS

Assessors completing at least one assessment:

Jenny Adams (DHS)
Manzoor Ahmed (ACT Health)
Ross Andrews (DSS)
Yolanda Appleby (ATO)
Luke Atkinson (Education)
Glen Baker (AIHW)
Jess Batterham (Education)
Annette Berry (DSS)
Peta Brill (Education)
Elizabeth Carr (Infrastructure)
Su-Ann Chan (Comcare)
Natalie Chapman (AMSA)
Rochelle Christian (Environment)
Kathie Dent (ARC)
Susan Diver-Tuck (ATO)
Cherie Ellison (CEC)
Bev Evans (Education)
Kylie Evans (Biotext)
Zainab Farouk (ATO)
Summer Field-Sinclair (ACT E&TD)

Denise Fowler (MDBA)
Tony Francis (AIHW)
Rose Fry (ATO)
Joanne Garrison (ACT E&TD)
Penny Gibson (ACT EP&D)
Lesley Gillis (Defence)
Jacki Grau (DSS)
Hugh Griffin (Infrastructure)
Jessica Griffiths (Defence)
Jeannie Henchman (AIHW)
Lara Hepburn (DSS)
Susannah Hiron (Industry)
Edward Holdaway (Finance)
Adele Holman (ATO)
Catherine Hope (Education)
Amanda Hughes (ATC)
Ina Jalil (DSS)
Renae James (ATO)
Sharmilla Jegatheswaran (Customs)
Sonia Jimenez Malfraz (Finance)
Craig Jones (ACT E&TD)
David Jones (ACT E&TD)
Sunita Kandola (ACT E&TD)
Brendan Kenna (ATO)
Naeem Khan (Immigration)
Lisa Kilpatrick (Education)
Penny Knox (ARC)
Nicole Kopplemann (DSS)
Racheal Kris (ANAO)
Gayle Lander (AFP)
Van Le (ATC)
Marion Maclean (ACT E&TD)
Margaret Makeham-Kirchner (Finance)
Allison Makin (ATO)
Samantha Mannette (Hse of Reps)
Jenie Mardel (ACT E&TD)
Casey Mazzarella (Hse or Reps)
Catriona Meere (ACT E&TD)
Nivad Nafisi (ACT E&TD)
Debra Narayan (ACT E&TD)
Miranda Ng (Communications)
Craig Nightingale (Education)
Alisha Pearson (DSS)
Tulip Penney (AIHW)
Melanie Pill (ACT E&TD)
Tamie Plant (ANAO)
Lauren Posmyk (AFMA)

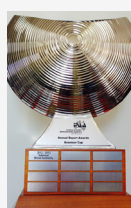
Dave Quan-Wing (DSS)
 Muhammad Qureshi (ANAO)
 Debashis Raha (MDBA)
 Melanie Reynolds (ATO)
 Victoria Richardson (DSS)
 Mary-Lou Roden (Education)
 Elise Rodgers (ATO)
 Melissa Savage (ATO)
 Elizabeth Shaw (DSS)
 Marty Simon (ACT E&TD)
 Vandana Singh (ANAO)
 Camilla Smith (Infrastructure)

Gabrielle Smith (ARC)
 Anshu Srivastava (ACT E&TD)
 Tracy Stewart (ACT E&TD)
 Caroline Sund (DSS)
 Angel Tang (Education)
 Maria Theoharous (AACQA)
 Lisa Tutalo (ATO)
 Torben Vang (ATO)
 Bronwyn Wilkes (ACT Health)
 Danielle Wills (Employment)
 Heather Woods (Education)
 Sebastian Yuen (Education)



The Department Shield recognises the department or agency that supplies the highest number of assessors, who not only complete assessor training, but also complete the assessment tasks.

The winner for 2013-14 is the Education and Training Directorate.



The Assessor Cup is awarded to the department or agency that supplies the highest number of assessors, as a proportion of the total staff of the department or agency.

The winner for 2013-14 is the Australian Research Council.

IPAA ACT SPONSORS

IPAA ACT would like to thank our sponsors for their ongoing support, including their assistance presenting awards.



